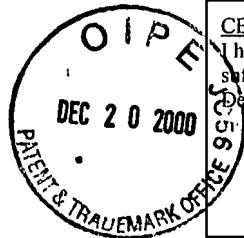


IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Thompson et al. Examiner: Unknown
 Serial No.: 09/689,989 Group Art Unit: Unknown
 Filed: October 13, 2000 Docket No.: 2316.926USD1
 Title: OUTSIDE PLANT FIBER DISTRIBUTION APPARATUS AND
 METHOD

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on December 14, 2000.

Steven C. Bruess

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
 Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Before examination, please enter the following amendment:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 18, 28 and 29.

REMARKS

Claims 19-27 are now pending for examination.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issue, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number noted.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
 P.O. Box 2903
 Minneapolis, MN 55402-0903
 (612) 332-5300 (Firm)
 (612) 336-4711 (Direct)

Date

Dec. 14, 2000

Steven C. Bruess
 Reg. No. 34,130